

You could call this "e" mail.

Bronx Rep. Jose Serrano is floating a \$2 billion measure that would be a jobs bill, energy bill, climate bill and postal service reformer all in one: outfitting letter carriers with 20,000 electric vehicles.

Serrano's idea is to not only cut emissions, reduce oil dependence, and give business to manufacturers, but also to shore up the electric grid.

That would be accomplished, Serrano's press release says, by using new technology that lets parked vehicles "serve as power storage devices for the grid, helping ease peak loads and store energy from intermittent or fluctuating sources, like wind power systems."

Serrano calls it the e-Drive bill.

"The e-Drive bill is a bold step to help the USPS achieve sustainability from an operational standpoint. It also will help them lead the greening of our nation's delivery fleets and jump-start the electric vehicle industry in the U.S.," said Serrano, chairman of the House Appropriations Financial Services and General Government subcommittee.

More details are after the jump.

New "e-Drive" Bill Introduced to Electrify Postal Delivery Fleet

December 17, 2009 - Washington, DC - Congressman José E. Serrano announced he had introduced H.R. 4399, The American Electric Vehicle Manufacturing Act or "e-Drive" bill late yesterday. The bill's original co-sponsors include Representatives Lee Terry (R-NE), Russ Carnahan (D-MO), Dan Maffei (D-NY), Steve Israel (D-NY), and Charles Gonzalez (D-TX).

If passed, the bill would begin a process of testing and deploying 20,000 electric-drive delivery vehicles for the U.S. Postal Service, operator of the nation's largest civilian fleet. Besides the environmental benefits and vast fuel savings the program would achieve, the bill's passage would also position the Postal Service fleet as a key energy storage asset for the nation's power grid. Through 'vehicle-to-grid' technologies, new and converted electric postal vehicles would serve as power storage devices for the grid, helping ease peak loads and store energy from intermittent or fluctuating sources, like wind power systems.

"The e-Drive bill is a bold step to help the USPS achieve sustainability from an operational standpoint. It also will help them lead the greening of our nation's delivery fleets and jump-start the electric vehicle industry in the U.S.," said Congressman Serrano, Chairman of the House Appropriations Financial Services and General Government subcommittee, which oversees the federal payment to the USPS. "Through a rigorous testing and competitive grant process, administered by the Department of Energy, manufacturers, large and small, will compete to bring their leading-edge technologies to the market. The industry will grow stronger as a result--creating knowledge, deploying new technologies, and producing quality American jobs. Our nation must become a leader in green technologies and leveraging the enormous assets of the USPS provides us with a direct route toward that goal."

e-Drive will allocate up to \$2 billion for a two-phase, multi-track testing and manufacturing program, administered by DOE, for the design, deployment, and assessment of Electric Drive Vehicles (EVs), and related power grid infrastructure, moving EVs from design to manufacturing to daily use.

"This legislation will provide a much-needed boost to the development and use of electric drive vehicles on a nation-wide scale," said Congressman Lee Terry (R-NE). "It will stimulate private sector investment in electric drive vehicles, powertrains and new battery technologies. It also addresses Smart Grid integration through new Vehicle-to Grid technologies. I look forward to working with my colleague, Mr. Serrano, on this forward-thinking approach to less dependence on fossil fuels and reducing emissions from mobile sources."

"By supplying new, more efficient electric vehicles built right here in the United States we reduce fuel costs for the struggling Postal Service and jolt American clean-energy manufacturing, creating jobs here at home," said Congressman Russ Carnahan (D-MO-3).

"This bill will spur American electric vehicle production, creating manufacturing jobs and moving us toward a green economy. Central New York is a leader in green technology innovation, and I am confident our region will contribute to the E-Drive program's success," said Congressman Dan Maffei, (D-NY)

"The United States Postal Service maintains the largest civilian vehicle fleet in the world with about 221,000 vehicles in service," said Congressman Steve Israel (D-NY). "By converting to a greener electric fleet we will be using the purchasing power of the federal government to spur innovation, create new green jobs and reduce energy costs for the postal service. I've worked with Congressman Serrano on demonstration projects using these vehicles in New York and I am proud to continue to work with him on the e-drive bill."

"As world leaders convene at the UN Climate Conference to find ways to reduce global carbon emissions, we are doing our part here with the introduction of 'e-Drive'," said Congressman Charles A. Gonzalez, co-sponsor of this bill. "Homes in America are visited by the USPS six days a week, and it only makes sense that we find a green alternative to one of the largest delivery fleets. With e-Drive we can lessen our dependence on fossil fuels, reduce our carbon emissions, and create more green jobs as we encourage the car manufacturers to develop more non-polluting vehicles."

"This legislation uses the unique characteristics of the Postal Service's existing transportation network to rapidly increase the market for electric vehicles in the United States," said Ruth Y. Goldway, Chairman, U.S. Postal Regulatory Commission. "It provides well-deserved support for the Postal Service and a reasoned plan for the simultaneous development of the electric grid and non-polluting automobiles. I congratulate Congressman Serrano on his foresight and leadership putting forward this program to create green jobs, an improved electric grid and - most importantly - a revitalized mail delivery system."

"Done right, electric vehicles provide a huge opportunity to add stability and versatility to the grid and because of their crucial storage capacity they can stimulate private investment in renewable electricity," said Jon Wellinghoff, chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

William Burrus, president of the American Postal Workers Union, praised the bill, saying "It will be good for the Postal Service, good for the environment and good for the economy."

"PJM is very supportive of congressional direction that helps to advance vehicle-to-grid technology," said Terry Boston, President and CEO of PJM, the largest Independent System Operator in the country. ISOs are the non-profit entities that operate the nation's electrical grid. "Vehicle-to-grid is a credible technology that has been successfully demonstrated within the PJM territory for more than two years. Electric vehicle integration is both a challenge and an opportunity that PJM is prepared to facilitate in the near-term. A highly visible fleet of United States Postal Service vehicles would not only showcase clean and economic transportation, but with smart charging would provide a positive contribution to the electric grid."

Several postal EVs have been deployed in Serrano's district since the late 1990's, which underscored for him the viability and importance of the technology. Serrano recognized, however, that the USPS lacked the resources to make a large-scale investment in fleet-wide purchases. Many of these technologies are now deployable as a result of significant DOE and private sector investments, but the electric vehicle industry is now at a point where it needs a major customer to provide demand for large-scale deployment.

"Our nation is ready to support an electric vehicle fleet," added Serrano. "Our power grid would benefit, our industrial base would benefit, our environment would benefit, and under this approach, the USPS, as well as its employees and customers, would benefit. It's a win-win situation all around. I look forward to passing this bill with my allies in Congress, and the support of the public and private sectors."

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Read more: <http://www.nydailynews.com/blogs/dc/2009/12/jose-serrano-drives-for-e-mail.html#ixzz0a4XRYgd1>

